352.0775
M184m
1893

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

MESSAGE

OF

MAYOR JOHN CORSCOT,

DELIVERED TO THE

COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MADISON,

APRIL 18, 1893.

352.0775
M184m
1893

MAYOR'S MESSAGE.

Gentlemen of the Common Council:

In assuming the control and management of any business enterprise it is a well settled principle to take into consideration its resources and liabilities for the purpose of ascertaining how far that business may be safely extended. This principle should prevail in the management of municipal affairs, and in order that we may know what money we have to apply to the necessary running expenses of the city government, and what for street and other improvements, the clerk has carefully prepared the annexed financial statement:

The funds in the treasury April 10, 1892, as set forth in the mayor's inaugural address, one year ago, were as follows:

Poll tax fund	$86 00
Interest on refunding bonds	7,625 00
Interest on water bonds	2,675 00
Bond fund	21,728 70
Forest Hill cemetery fund	2,702 81
Free library fund	3,800 38
Special sidewalk fund	228 09
Special sewer tax	3 00
Water fund	12,419 59
Special street funds	1,323 68
General fund	21,124 26
Total	$73,716 51

The receipts from all sources from April 10, 1892, to April 10, 1893, inclusive, have been as follows:

GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS.

Liquor licenses	$15,320 00
Fines in city cases	73 00
Show licenses	257 00
Hack licenses	160 00
Court costs in city cases	165 18

Billiard licenses	$480 80
Steamboat licenses	85 00
Licenses to sell on streets	76 00
Auction license	5 00
Drainlayers' licenses	40 00
Tax for general city purposes	39,822 04
Fees on taxes	583 42
Special sidewalk tax	229 50
Sewer permits	65 00
J. Ledwith for old iron	2 50
F. F. F. laundry, by St. Supt. Chandler	2 50
D. Stephens for Carroll street gutters	3 75
D. Stephens for stone for street railway	492 09
D. Stephens for weighing stone	76 35
M. Hinrichs, street superintendent, dirt sold	48 00
A. Kinnair, payment quarry contract	675 00
N. Quinn, use steam roller	90 00
General Electric Co., by M. Hinrichs, crossings	70 30
Total	$58,822 43

Special Fund Receipts.

Poll tax with tax 1892	$85 00
Interest on refunding bonds, tax 1892	7,625 00
Interest on water bonds, tax 1892	1,600 00
Bond fund, tax 1892	3,432 27
Dane county, fines in state cases	451 00
Dane county, state and county taxes	41,213 09
Forest Hill cemetery fund, tax	500 00
Forest Hill cemetery fund, sale of lots	1,313 49
Forest Hill cemetery fund, wood sold	45 70
Free library fund, tax	2,500 00
Free library fund, fines and dues	70 00
Water fund, tax 1892	5,000 00
Water fund, water rents	14,907 37
Water fund, water permits	284 00
Water fund, supplies sold	89 20
Board of education, tax 1892	34,245 74
Sewer tax 1892	2,153 13
Langdon street improvement fund, tax 1892	75 30
Carroll street improvement fund, tax 1892	475 60
Gilman street improvement fund, tax 1892	822 56
East Gorham street improvement fund, tax 1892	634 81
West Gorham street improvement fund, tax 1892	768 66
State street improvement fund, tax and bonds	5,610 83
Pinckney street improvement fund tax	287 53
South Carroll street improvement fund tax	69 87
Butler street improvement fund, tax and bonds	2,929 85
Murray street improvement fund, tax and bonds	1,254 41
Lake street improvement fund, tax and bonds	3,514 24
Wilson street improvement fund bonds	10,000 00
Francis street improvement fund bonds	2,000 00
Total	$143,958 65

The expenditures from April 10, 1892, to April 10, 1893 have been as follows:

General Fund Expenditures.

Care and subsistance city teams, drivers' pay, etc	$2,212 63
Street lighting: Electric light, $5,541.98; Gas, $2,261.28; Oil lamps, $883.12	8,686 38
Crushed stone for general street improvements	7,787 85
Iron bridge on Sherman avenue	2,530 00
Stone abutments for same	1,860 87
Salary, surveyor, $1,000; street superintendent, $840	1,840 00
Expenses for labor, material, etc., in improving and repairing and cleaning streets, cross-walks, etc	18,509 48
Printing	860 70
Expenses at city hall — janitor, fuel, light, etc	1,709 45
Expenses prosecutions under city ordinances, judge's and court clerk's salaries, etc	2,174 54
City clerk's salary	1,200 00
Legal expenses — city attorney's salary, etc	617 20
One thousand six hundred feet rubber hose for fire department	1,600 00
Expenses assessment and collection taxes	1,146 74
Election expenses	1,497 74
Pound expenses	371 25
Costs in suits	143 00
Decorating city for G. A. R. reunion	250 00
Appropriation to city hospital committee	244 83
Steamboat inspection and weed commissioner	78 50
Expenses fire department	4,305 24
Refunded taxes	20 40
Police expenses	4,397 10
Treasurer's salary	1,200 00
Health expenses	2,645 87
Abating nuisances	41 65
Repair engine-houses	40 90
Sewer repairs	60 70
Total	$68,033 02

Special Fund Expenditures.

Water-works, construction expenses	$13,967 23
Water-works, operating expenses	11,284 14
Water-works, repairs	21 40
Interest on water bonds	2,675 00
Interest on refunding bonds	7,625 00
Water bonds paid	21,500 00
Dane county, state and county taxes	41,213 09
Forest Hill cemetery fund	1,222 23
Paid sidewalk and gutter contractors	260 93
Free library, vouchers paid	2,092 65
Board of education	34,245 74

Paid sewer contractors	$2,282 48
Carroll street improvement fund, bonds and interest paid	270 34
Gilman street improvement, interest paid	91 20
East Gorham street improvement fund, interest paid	62 00
West Gorham street improvement fund, interest, etc., paid	182 80
State street improvement fund, paid contractor	4,868 15
Pinckney street improvement fund, interest paid	28 00
South Carroll street improvement fund, interest paid	8 00
Butler street improvement fund, paid contractor	2,118 71
Murray street improvement fund, paid contractor	1,053 45
Lake street improvement fund, paid contractor	3,215 84
Wilson street improvement fund, paid contractor	5,288 35
Francis street improvement fund, paid contractor	2,026 30
West Johnson street improvement fund, paid contractor	777 19
East Johnson street improvement fund, paid contractor	1,288 76
Total	$159,668 98

RECAPITULATION.

Balance on hand April 10, 1892	$73,716 51	
General fund receipts	58,822 43	
Special fund receipts	143,958 65	
General fund expenditures		$68,033 02
Special fund expenditures		159,668 98
Balance April 10, 1893		48,795 59
	$276,497 59	$276,497 59

There was transferred during the year:

From the water fund to the bond fund	$5,000 00
From the poll tax fund to the general fund	86 00

The funds in the treasury April 10, 1893, as above stated, were $48,795.50, and classified as follows:

Poll-tax fund	$85 00
Interest on refunding bonds	7,025 00
Interest on water bonds	1,600 00
Bond fund	8,660 97
Dane county — fines	451 00
Forest Hill Cemetery fund	3,339 77
Free Library fund	4,277 73
Special sidewalk fund	88 47
Water fund	2,427 39
Special street funds	8,122 33
General fund	12,117 93
Total	$48,795 59

This balance of $12,117.93 in the general fund, it is estimated, will be increased prior to the next tax levy by the following receipts:

From liquor licenses		$14,600 00
From show licenses		150 00
Hack licenses		100 00
Billiard licenses		300 00
Steamboat licenses		75 00
Total		$15,225 00
Making the total available for general city purposes		$27,342 93
Deducting from this sum the monthly expenses for March	$5,261 09	
And the expenses for the first three weeks of April, estimated at	2,425 00	7,686 09
Leaves a balance available for city purposes of		$19,656 84

The estimated annual expenses of the city government, outside of purchases or other improvements, are as follows:

Salary of clerk, treasurer, attorney, assessor, street superintendent and surveyor	$6,500 00
Street lighting	9,500 00
Fire department expenses, pay of officers and men	4,300 00
Care and subsistence of city teams	2,200 00
Printing	800 00
Expenses city hall, janitor, light, fuel, etc	1,800 00
Prosecutions under city ordinances, judge's and clerk's salaries, officers' fees, board of prisoners, etc	2,200 00
Election expenses	800 00
Pound expenses and abating nuisances	400 00
Police expenses	4,400 00
Health expenses and city hospital	2,800 00
Expenses of board of review	90 00
Steamboat inspection	50 00
Total	$35,840 00

It appears, therefore, that about $3,000 per month is required to meet the running expenses of the city, or about $21,000 during the seven months before the next tax becomes available.

The bonded indebtedness of the city on the 1st day of April, 1893, was as follows:

Board of education — bonds and notes	$17,000 00
Watertown Railroad bond (outlawed)	1,000 00
Water bonds	32,000 00
Refunding bonds	152,500 00
Special street improvement bonds	36,200 00
Total	$238,700 00

On said 1st day of April there was deposited in the State Bank of this city by the city treasurer $8,500 of the money in the sinking fund in payment of called water bonds, and special street improvement bonds to the amount of $1,700 were also taken up, paid and canceled on that date, making a total reduction in the bonded debt as given in the above statement of $10,200.

From the foregoing statement it appears that the whole amount available for general city purposes prior to the next tax levy is $19,656.84, and that the fixed charges or running expenses which must be paid out of this amount are $21,000, and that no money whatever is left that can be applied to the general improvement of the principal thoroughfares, which since the construction of the street-car line need so much repair and improvement.

In order that the condition of affairs may be better understood, a comparative statement of the amount of money in the treasury applicable to street or other improvements at the beginning of every administration for the past seven years is given:

In 1887 there was the sum of	$12,644 06
In 1888 there was the sum of	6,586 15
In 1889 there was the sum of	9,902 72
In 1890 there was the sum of	000 00
In 1891 there was the sum of	11,334 08
In 1892 there was the sum of	7,724 26

In 1893 we lack the sum of $1,344.16 of having enough to pay the city's running expenses until the next tax is available.

From these figures it appears that the nearest approach to the present financial outlook was at the beginning of the administration of 1890, when the funds for streets and other purposes were entirely expended. That administration, like ourselves, was unfortunate at the outset, but some relief came to them through the sale of the hospital lots. This council has no real estate that ought to be sold, and unless funds can be provided in some other way, many urgent street improvements must wait till another year.

In connection with the financial affairs of the city attention is called to the fact that the following suits for damages are now awaiting determination:

Henry Laue claim	$5,000 00
(Judgment for $2,000 appealed to supreme court.)	
Geo. C. Kollock claim (in circuit court)	15,000 00
Marcia Reed claim (in circuit court)	10,000 00
Albert Sperling claim (in circuit court)	5,000 00
O. M. Twitchell claim (in circuit court)	1,500 00
Total	$36,500 00

Street paving at private expense was begun in this city in 1886, and has been continued with more or less vigor since then, until now many of the residence streets are paved, others soon will be, and not a few of our public-spirited citizens have the subject of street paving in front of their premises under consideration.

In this connection the question of how best to care for and keep macadam streets in repair presents itself. The plan adopted in Canada and some of the eastern states of dividing a certain number of miles of road into sections of two or three miles each and employing a man to go over it daily to keep it clean and in repair has many advantages over the system of allowing the street to take care of itself until holes appear and then top-dressing the whole surface to put it in passable condition. If the system referred to, now in vogue on the railways of the country, were adopted as to the macadam streets of the city, the men employed

to do that work could also have devolved on them the duty of cleaning the crosswalks during wet weather, of seeing to it that the sidewalks along the street were in good repair, and that gutters were kept free of rubbish and in condition to carry off the surface water. It would seem as though a system which has given such satisfactory results elsewhere possesses merit, and it would not be amiss to give it a trial here.

The tearing up of paved and other streets, for the laying of sewer, gas or water pipes, and the condition in which the streets are left after the work is said to be finished, is a source of annoyance to every citizen and tax-payer and should receive immediate attention. Every person or corporation opening a street for the purpose of laying pipes should be required to replace all the earth and paving material taken out, which can be done if properly tamped when filling is begun, and on paved streets the paving material should be kept separate and placed where it was found instead of being mixed with earth and put, as is sometimes the case, at the bottom of the ditch. Many of the law suits against the city arise from no other cause than the careless work referred to, and it is suggested that the license bond of every person or firm whose province it is to perform this class of work be carefully examined to the pecuniary responsibility of the parties who are sureties, to the end that prosecution against offending parties may be successfully carried out. It is time it was plainly understood by parties doing or having in charge this class of work, that they must fix their prices high enough to enable them to do first-class work, and that they will be held strictly accountable for any failure on their part to leave the streets in as good condition for travel after their work is done as before they began. The failure to guard open ditches at night by fencing the same and displaying proper signals to warn travelers of danger is pointed out,

and the street superintendent and police officers should be alert and see to it that the parties neglectful in this direction do their share in keeping damage suits against the city at a minimum. The practice of tearing up three or four blocks of street late in the fall, putting paving material on one block of the graded portion and leaving the balance till the following spring, neither pleases the residents on the street where the work is being done, nor adds to the amiability of those who are of necessity required to pass over the unfinished portion, and should not be tolerated, and can be avoided by a little care at the time of inviting bids and making contracts.

The custom which has obtained to some extent of leaving boulders and other unused material on a paved street two or three months after the work is finished, as well as the custom of depositing rubbish and dead animals at the lake ends of streets, ought not to be followed longer. The streets are too valuable for storage purposes even were considerations of safety, health and beauty of no consequence.

Perfecting our sewerage system and the disposal of the sewage matter is to my mind one of the most important questions engaging the attention of our citizens, and the present method of discharging sewage into the lakes must be discontinued if the health of the city is to be maintained. When the present system was constructed flushing connections were left at various points, but these have never been continued to the surface of the ground or to points where they can be utilized at all seasons of the year. Then too it was the original intention to empty the sewers into the lakes only until such time as the city had means to provide disposal works or of chemically treating the sewage matter so as to render it harmless. Any one having doubts as to the polution of the waters of our lakes has only to go to the foot of Broom or Blair streets on a calm day and ob-

serve the dark streams discharged far out into the lake by main sewers at these points; and in warm weather with the wind from the opposite shore the sewage matter may be detected along the shores of that lake even if not seen.

What is true of Third Lake applies to Fourth Lake only to less extent; and it must be apparent to all of our citizens that the time has come when steps should be taken to stop the conversion of our lakes into cess-pools, and render them a menace to the healthfulness of our city instead of a source of pride and enjoyment to the people. It is respectfully suggested that the city engineer prepare plans and specifications for sewage disposal subject to the approval of an expert sanitary engineer and the local board of health, and that work in that direction be commenced as soon as funds therefor can be procured.

The public schools of the city are in a healthy and harmonious condition; the attendance was never better, and the results of the labors of school superintendent, principals and teachers was never more apparent than now in the classes promoted or sent out. The facilities for the accommodation of pupils, however, is not adequate, as the rooms are overcrowded, and the work of the teacher is hampered by reason of inability to give that individual attention to each pupil which is calculated to increase the class standing and insure the best results. The board of education has applied to the legislature for authority to loan from the state $30,000 to $35,000 with which to build a new five or six room school building in the Sixth ward and adding two rooms to the present Third ward building, which though it was the last school building put up cannot now accommodate the children of those of our citizens whose convenience it would serve to send pupils to that school. The board of education will undoubtedly have the hearty endorsement of this council in its efforts to promote education and increase school facilities.

The free city library, in which every citizen should feel pride, continues to supplement and extend the work of the public school in which it has been engaged since its organization. The means set apart for its maintenance and growth is too small and should be increased as soon as the financial condition of the city will admit, as no other city institution has given to the citizens greater value for the money invested.

The matter of street lighting will come up for your consideration. The cost of lighting streets will of necessity increase from year to year as population and the demand for more light increases unless more improved machinery shall lessen the cost of production. The plan of street lighting in this city appears somewhat faulty in that it seems to consult individual want fully as much as the public convenience, and it is therefore suggested to the committee having that matter in charge, that they thoroughly revise the present plan with a view to having a lesser number of lamps do the same work, and when they have determined on such plan and it has been approved by the council, that bids be invited for street lighting. If the bids received be considered too high, it would be in the interest of the city for the committee to ascertain from cities of equal population and similarly located and owning and operating their own lighting plant the following facts:

Cost of plant.

Cost per annum of maintenance and operation.

Number of lights and hours per night each light is used.

Cost and kind of coal used.

Allowing for depreciation, and a reasonable interest on the investment, and taking into consideration the difference in the price of coal, the committee would have facts on which it could make a proposition to local companies, which it seems to me would receive favorable consideration, and in case it did not the council might properly consider

the advisability of securing a lighting plant of its own. That there may be no misunderstanding of my position on this subject, allow me to say that I am not in sympathy with those who would encourage citizens and tax-payers of the city to invest money in an enterprise, be it electric lighting or street railway, and would then deliberately confiscate or depreciate that property by adverse legislation or ruinous competition on the part of the city; but the sentiment that the city should get its street lighting at cost and a fair interest has my approval. The chartering of a street railway or street lighting plant by a municipality is questionable if the city has means to embark in these enterprises on its own account; but having encouraged its own tax-payers to invest money in such enterprises by granting franchises to them, it should be just and not expect them to furnish their products or facilities to the city at less than cost and a fair interest on the investment.

The fire department is an harmonious and efficient branch of the city's public service, and my knowledge and observation leads me to believe that a better unpaid fire department does not exist in Wisconsin; and that it should be equipped and its usefulness extended by the introduction of a fire-alarm system is what the members of this council and tax-payers generally will concede. Such a system should be added to the department during the present year, if it can possibly be done with the means that will be at the disposal of this council; for who can conceive of anything more discouraging to a good fireman than to be called to the engine-house by a fire alarm, and get out into the street with his company, only to find for the next three minutes that the fire seems to be in seven different wards of the city while actually existing in but one.

The city water system is in efficient hands and continues to find favor with the people. The patrons of the system now number 1,554, and the total cost of the system to Oc-

tober 1, 1892, was $241,118.29. The receipts for water rents and permits for the year ending October 1, 1892, were $15,330.83, and the operating expenses for the corresponding period were $8,872.57. Our predecessors in office failed to provide in the last annual tax levy the usual fund with which to make improvements and extensions, so that at the present time there is not a dollar in the water fund with which to pay for an additional well, now being sunk to increase the failing water supply, or to lay mains to supply water to those who have petitioned therefor. What steps the water board contemplate taking or can take under the law to tide over their financial difficulties is not known, but whatever assistance this council can give should be freely rendered.

The citizens of Madison are not only to be congratulated on the excellent electric street railway system chartered and built during the past year, which has displaced the pondering mule and his energetic exhorter to duty, but also on the efficient management and courteous attention to patrons which has been accorded on the part of superintendent, conductors and motormen. Few of us are willing to admit that we were ever fully satisfied to ride after the slow-going mule, nor do we realize how easy it is to fall into temptation until we see one of the nice, clean cars of the new system approaching and instinctively put our hand in pocket for the requisite nickel. It seems a satisfactory system, as now managed, and contributes greatly to the comfort and convenience of those living remote from the city's center, and will, under just treatment and fair patronage, build up and enhance suburban property. The company, however, should not fail to merit a continuance of the public good will and should be watchful that the streets occupied by its tracks are kept in repair to the extent that such duty is required of them in their franchise.

The Madison Improvement Association, created for the

purpose of further beautifying the city and advancing its interests, has been organized and is prepared for active work with the gratifying sum of $11,000 (subscribed by citizens who have only the city's good in view) with which to carry out the purpose of its being. This organization, as well as others having the good of Madison as their only aim and purpose, will, it is believed, enlist your hearty co-operation and encouragement, and its officers and committees will undoubtedly receive respectful attention at your hands. In order that they may counsel with us as to our work, and to the end that we may become better acquainted with their views on all questions in which we are mutually interested, I hope to see them often at our meetings.

In conclusion, I trust that our meetings will be harmonious; that our attendance upon them may be prompt; and that in the discharge of my duties I shall have your undivided support, as you will have my hearty co-operation in all matters proposed for the public interest.

JOHN CORSCOT.

3 0112 062197196